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S E R M O N

P R E A C H ' D before the

Herefordshire SOCIETY

A T

St. MICHAEL'S CORNHILL, *London*,

O N

W E D N E S D A Y, *February 2. 1725.*

By *T H O M A S B U L L O C K*, M. A.

Chaplain to the Right Reverend the Lord
Bishop of *Norwich*.

L O N D O N :

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SEEK M O N

HERSCHELS SOCIETY

St. Nicholas's Cornhill, London

WEDNESDAY, February 2, 1855

By the Hon. Secy, Mr. A.

Chaplain to the High Commission and Lord
Bishop of Exeter

SEEK M O N

Presented to the Library of the Society
by the Hon. Secy, Mr. A.



TO MY
FRIENDS and COUNTRYMEN

John Kirwood, Esq;
Mr. John Foot
Mr. Thomas Badham
Mr. James Cornwall
Mr. Henry Frame
Mr. Timothy Ravenhill

} STEWARDS.

And the rest of the
GENTLEMEN

*Belonging to the
Herefordshire SOCIETY

THIS
SERMON,

Preached and Published at their Request,
Is humbly Dedicated.

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FRIENDS and COUNTRYMEN

TO MY

John Kirkwood, Esq.
Mr. John Forster
Mr. Thomas Baskerville
Mr. James Cunningham
Mr. Henry Brown
Mr. Timothy Riddell

And the rest of the

CENTLEMEN

Belonging to the

HERSCOFF SOCIETY

THIS

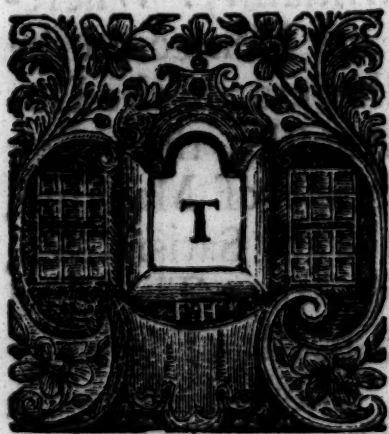
STERMON

Preached and Published at their Request
Is humbly Dedicated



ACTS II. 46. latter Part.

----- *Did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.*



THE Christianity, the real Nature and genuine Effects of it are best display'd, and most convincingly represented to us, in the Lives of its true Professors. There we see the Excellency of every Duty, the Harmony and Consistency of all its Parts ; the Force of its Arguments, the Influence of its Promises, the Tendency of its Practice, and the Advantages that flow from it. These are not so easily comprehended by *Thought*, or conceived by *Reflection*, as they are seen by *Example*, and felt by *Experience*. Our Reason, unassisted by Observation, may sometimes fail us, in finding out the true Nature, Properties and Tendency of every Duty ; our Judgment likewise, in putting the several

ral Parts of our Religion together; our corrupt Affections may hinder us from viewing it in its proper Light; Prejudice may suggest a great many Difficulties, which are not real: And in general, Indisposition and Carelessness may conceal from us a great many of its Excellencies, and incline us to think more indifferently of it, than it truly deserves. It is a constant and uniform Practice of it therefore, which alone can shew us its true Beauty and Worth; what Effect it has upon the Temper and Disposition of our Minds, what Satisfaction it produces, what Influence upon our present Happiness, and how great the Pleasures that flow from it.

For this purpose St. L U K E has in this Chapter transmitted to Posterity a short, but plain Account of the *first Converts* to Christianity. Wherein we may observe, That as no Men could be more sincere and stedfast Followers of the Doctrine of C H R I S T and his Apostles, than they were; so none, even the happiest of Mankind, could have greater Comfort and Satisfaction, greater inward Joy and Pleasure, than They had therein. Other Men might boast of greater worldly Advantages, might abound more in Wealth, and be in higher Stations, might make a greater outward Appearance, and have every thing more costly and magnificent about them; but the inward Satisfaction arising from them, could not equal that solid steady pleasure, which These had in the Discharge of their Christian Duty. Others might have their Tables set off with greater Elegance, their Meals prepared with much more Art and Costliness, every thing more exactly contrived to gratify the Senses, and please a hu-

a humourfome Taste ; but they could not *fit down* to Table with greater Chearfulness, or *rise from* it with less Disgust, than These true Christians, *whodid eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.* They had within themselves that, which made every Condition and Circumstance of Life easy to them, a good Conscience, a good Hope towards GOD, and a good Disposition towards all Men. These were the Effects of the Religion they embraced ; and these produced in them a constant Chearfulness of Temper, and a continual Peace of Mind : And They were found to have as much more real Felicity, and true Enjoyment of this present World, than other Men, as They had learnt to *despise it more*, and to *love it less*.

From this Pattern of the *primitive Christians*, given us by the *sacred Historian*, I propose to shew,

I. That Chearfulness, or Gladness is consistent with a truly Christian Temper.

II. That our Religion is so far from discouraging it, that a true Sense, and sincere Practice thereof, is naturally apt to produce in us a constant Chearfulness of Mind.

I. I shall endeavour to shew, That Chearfulness or Gladness is consistent with a truly Christian Temper. And this I think is evidently signified to us, in the Character of those bright and shining *Lights* of Christianity, here set before us. Of whom it is said, That *They gladly received the word*, preacht to them by the Apostles ; that *They continued stedfastly* in it ; being persuaded of the Truth of the Doctrine deliver'd, and living

conformably to the Precepts enjoyn'd them. The great Christian Law of Charity, and of loving one another was their chief Employment. It so united them together in Mind and Affection, that our *Historian* calls it (Chap. iv. 32.) *Being of one Heart and one Soul*; and the Influence it had upon them was so great, that They freely sold their Possessions (without any Command obliging them thereto, as appears from the 4th Verse of the 5th Chap.) and distributed them so generously to the Relief and Support of one another, that They seem'd *to have all things common*. They met together daily in the Temple, performing all religious Offices. They frequently communicated in the Lord's-Supper, and in other Acts of Piety and Devotion, as the *Evangelist* expresses it, *In breaking of Bread, and in Prayers*. They had besides these their Love-Feasts, or Feasts of Charity, which is called in the Context, *Breaking Bread from House to House*; where They *eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour and good will towards all people*. This their Practice, as it is a perfect Image of a Christian Temper and Conduct; so was it also the Source and Fountain of that Chearfulness of Mind, which always appeared in them. Their Joy abounded in proportion to their good Works; their inward Comfort and Satisfaction was large and extensive as their Hopes; and the Peace and Serenity of their Minds kept a constant and even pace with the Purity and Integrity of their Hearts: They knew as little of Sorrow, as they did of Sin, and the Mercies and Promises of GOD made them to *rejoyce with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory*.

And

And whom could Chearfulness become better, than them that had so solid and good Foundation for it? Wherefore we find it a Duty inculcated upon all sincere Christians to *Rejoyce evermore*. St. PAUL thought his *Philippians* had so good a Title to it, that he doubles the Exhortation upon them, *Rejoyce in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoyce*: As if he had been afraid, lest they should mistake the Nature of Christianity, and so deprive themselves of this, its peculiar Privilege.

“ There are many Persons indeed, who, either
“ from a natural Unchearfulness of Heart, or
“ mistaken Notions of Piety, or Weakness of
“ Understanding, love to indulge an uncomfor-
“ table way of Life, and give themselves up a
“ Prey to Grief and Melancholy”. Supersti-
tious Fears and groundless Scruples cut them off from all true Satisfaction in life; imagining, that because CHRIST has commanded us to deny our selves in things unlawful, we must therefore be dead to all innocent Chearfulness, and that to become a Christian is to become a Self-tormentor. But instead of that we see, that a true Spirit of Religion cheers and composes the Soul. It banishes indeed all Levity of Behaviour, all vicious and dissolute Mirth; it forbids *wantonness and foolish gesting, which are not convenient*; but in exchange, it fills the mind with perpetual Serenity and uninterrupted Chearfulness, and makes a Man easy to himself, and to all about him. This is so far from being inconsistent with Christianity, that its surest Foundation and best Support is to be found therein. We are not only permitted, but commanded to cultivate this happy Temper. *Be glad and rejoyce O ye Righteous,*
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for it becometh well the Just to be thankful. And Chearfulness is a sort of continual Gratitude to our great Creator; if it be rightly founded, 'tis an Honour both to Religion and to our Maker: It is an implicit Declaration of our Satisfaction in all the Dispensations of Divine Providence; it is a manifest Token of our hearty Submission to the Will of GOD; it is making his Workmanship to praise him. If it be constant and uniform, it discovers a great deal of true Religion, That there is no inward Sting of Conscience, no Gall of Bitterness, no Envy or Desire of Revenge; but that all is calm and at peace within, that there is a contented Spirit, a Contempt of the Vicissitudes of this mortal State, and a good Disposition towards all Men. For without these it is impossible to maintain a constant Chearfulness; and our Religion obliges us to *all these*, and to every thing that tends to make the Mind easy, Conversation agreeable, and Life pleasant. Which brings me,

II. To shew, That a true Sense and sincere Practice of our most holy Religion is naturally apt to produce in us a constant Chearfulness of Temper: Which it does,

1st, By confirming us in the Belief of a GOD, and of his providential Care of the World, particularly of good Men, and those that endeavour to please him. Upon Reflection, we must find our selves so naturally unfit and incapable to compass or effect our own Happiness, and to satisfy even the necessary Desires of the Soul, that we can have but a very ungrateful and uncomfortable

fortable Prospect of human Life, without the Belief of a Supream Being, who can overrule Contingencies, govern all Events, and direct them to our Good; who has the Means and Instruments of Happiness in his Power, sufficient in himself, and no ways wanting to us, if we will be guided by him in the Way that leads to Happiness and Perfection. If all were Chance; what a multitude of Misfortunes are we liable to, which we have neither Capacity nor Foresight to provide against, or prevent? If undistinguishing Fate prevail'd; we know not what Variety of untry'd Ills, that blind Mistress of our Fortunes may have in reserve for us. From either of these Suppositions, no Security, no solid Peace can come. But in the Account, which our Religion gives us of Things, we are assured, not only that there is a Wise Intelligent Being, who is able to make us happy by an Infinity of Means; but also that He is truly willing, and sincerely disposed to do it; that He is concern'd for us with the Tenderness of a Father, and will deny us nothing, that He sees needful, or expedient for us; that if we will follow his Directions, and commit the Event of Things to Him, *all Things shall work together for our Good*; and that his ultimate Design is, in all the various Dispensations of his Providence, to make us compleatly happy.

How joyful and pleasant a Thing must it be, to look up to such a Being, on whom we have so great Dependance; To see our Patron and Protector so infinite in Wisdom, and so excellent in Power; who has neither Insufficiency to cramp him, nor Envy to prevent him, from designing and effecting our greatest Good; but is both able

and willing to do for us, *beyond all that we can ask or think.* Here is no room for Fear, or Suspicion left, lest our true Interest should fail thro' Neglect, or be disappointed thro' the Malice of Second Causes. This Perswasion may justly free us from all Dread of future Events, seeing they are order'd and disposed by an allwise and good Being; and may also make us easy and well-satisfied under every Circumstance and Condition of Life, being perswaded, That every Thing that befalls us is by his Appointment, who has engaged to do for us, what is best and most convenient.

Nor is this our Perswasion weakly founded, but has the strongest Arguments to confirm and strengthen it. The Creation, which is already past, and the continual Instances of Providence, which we daily Experience, are, to every serious thinking Person, a full Conviction of that tender Care and Concern, which GOD has for his Creatures. But the frequent Assurances of Scripture, together with that stupendous Instance of his Love to us, in sending his SON, even whilst we were Enemies to him, to be a Sacrifice and Propitiation for our Sins, is an invincible Argument of his unchangeable Purpose, to deny us nothing, that is wholesome for us. For as the Apostle argues, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him freely give us all things?* Such a Reflection as this cannot fail to bring Comfort and Chearfulness along with it, to make us easy and well-pleased with all the various Dispensations of Providence, and to welcome every Circumstance of Life with Joy and Satisfaction. But this is not
all.

all. Christianity has improved this Reflection much to our Advantage, teaching us

2dly, That our Dependence on GOD is not confined within the narrow Compass of this present Life; but has yet a much more agreeable and delightful Prospect beyond the Grave, the full Assurance of a blessed Immortality; when, not only that which is best, but also that which is most agreeable and delightful to us, shall be our Portion; where we shall be out of the Reach and Power of every Thing, that can in the least molest, or hurt us; where our Happiness shall be in every respect the most compleat and perfect, and continue to be such to all Eternity. To one, that has a right and true Sense of this, nothing can be disagreeable, which is design'd to forward him in his Pursuit of so great, so good an End: And as such (considering the good Providence of Almighty GOD) we may look upon every thing, that befalls us in this Life, and therefore receive every Thing with Chearfulness, at least without Repining. For can we repine at that momentary Affliction, which *worketh out for us such an exceeding Weight of Glory?* Can we be uneasy under that Tryal, which prepares us for such a lasting and durable State of Happiness? Can the Heirs of such *exceeding great and precious Promises* be dejected? Or they, that live under the constant Sense, and continual Hope of so great Reward, be without a Stay and Support, much superior to every worldly Cause of Uneasiness and Discontent? This is the Christian's Hope and Belief: This Assurance he has to keep up his Spirits, to chear his Soul, to comfort and support him in
2. every

every Emergency, and to fill him with all Joy and Peace in believing.

From the Faith of a Christian, which so plentifully administers Matter of Joy and Gladness, I proceed to his Practice: And to consider how that serves to beget in him Chearfulness and Serenity of Mind.

1st. His Contempt of the World, and his Indifference to Things present and sensible, which his Religion carefully inculcates, is of great Service to him in this Respect. For this secures him from all those anxious Cares, and needless Fears, and impatient Longings, which worldly Minds are necessarily distracted with. If we could look into all the sorrowful Hearts of Men, and know their Thoughts, we should find, That the great Cause and Spring of all their Uneasiness is an immoderate Love of the World and its Enjoyments. They are either impatiently desiring what they have not, or uneasy with their present Condition; either lamenting some past Loss or Disappointment, or else in Fear of some Change and unwelcome Turn of Affairs; either in Pain for the Success of their Attempts, or distracted with Cares to make their Purposes and Designs effectual. But the true Christian is happily eased of all these anxious, distracting Thoughts. For beyond a prudent Care, in the Use of honest Means, to manage and dispose his worldly Affairs, he has no Concern. He is not at all solicitous about the Events of Things; but leaves that entirely to God, on whom it depends; One, that will not fail to order it for his Good, and is therefore prepared to embrace it, be it what it will,
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and

and cannot be displeased with it, knowing, That infinite Wisdom was his Carver. " By this Means " he has his Passions in Subjection, his Mind " free, his Thoughts undisturbed, and enjoys the " World, without being a Slave to it, in a quiet " Indifferency and a comfortable Liberty". Whilst other Men are wracking their Inventions, distracting their Heads, and torturing their Thoughts, upon some foolish worldly Scheme, either of Wealth, or Grandeur, or Pleasure; He sits down with Chearfulness and Thanksgiving with that Portion of this World, which the Goodness of GOD has afforded him, without repining that 'tis not better, and without any *anxious* Thoughts of improving it. Whilst others are forc'd to fly to Company and Drinking, and Debauchery, to bury their worldly Cares and their Senses together, he has *none* of these Cares to bury, and yet has lasting Foundation of Comfort in that Rock of Ages, who can never fail him, and in that perfect State of Happiness, which he knows to be prepared for him in another Life.

2dly. Another true and solid Ground of Chearfulness, which our Religion administers, is that kind and good Disposition towards all Men, which it requires us to cultivate and improve. This frees the Mind from those uneasy Passions of Hatred and Desire of Revenge, from Envy and Narrowness of Spirit, those Cankers of the Soul, that eat out all it's Peace, and leave nothing but the Dust of Malice and Contention behind them. They that are possessed of them are like a troubled Sea, which cannot rest; those turbulent Dispositions are always casting up Dirt and Mire; they

they break forth into Strife and fierce Debates, are vented in Bitterness and Rage and Fury ; or else they lie smother'd in evil Purposes and Designs, burning, like a latent Fire, in the Breast, till with collected Force they break out with greater Violence.

But Christianity obliges us to rid our selves of all such restless Inmates, *To be kindly affection'd towards all, and as much as in us lies, to be at peace with all men* : Instead of devising Mischief against others, to study to do them good, and to help and assist them to the utmost of our Power : To look upon our main Interest, as best promoted by a most diffusive Charity, and the Foundation of our real Happiness, as best laid in Works of Mercy and universal Benevolence.

When a Man is become in some measure Master of such a Temper, and inured to such a Practice ; How great Peace and Satisfaction must he find within ; conscious to himself of no evil Intention against any Man ; but disposed to be pleased with, and to take Delight in his Neighbour's Welfare, and to rejoyce in every thing that befalls him for his good ! All the good he does to others (which his Religion obliges him to, according as he has Capacity and Opportunity) recoils upon him with double Satisfaction : For the Pleasure he takes in seeing a Fellow-creature benefited or relieved, is improved by this agreeable Reflection, That his Hand relieved him. He has the Pleasure likewise to see the Image of God improve in himself, *who is good to all, and whose tender Mercies are over all his Works.*

And thus, whilst other Men teaze, and vex, and torment themselves at the good Condition of
their

their Neighbour; or else make themselves miserable, in striving to make others so too: *He* feels a pleasure arising from *their* good, and increases his *own* Satisfaction, by contributing to the Ease of *other* Persons. Whilst *they*, through Covetousness, or Fraud, or Oppression, or by other unlawful and indirect Means, treasure to themselves Wrath against the Day of Wrath; *He*, by Works of Mercy and Charity, relieves his own Bowels, does a very sensible Act of Kindness to himself, and lays up a good Foundation against the time to come, that he may inherit eternal Life. Which leads me to consider,

3dly, One further solid Ground of Chearfulness and Pleasure, which the Christian has, consequent upon his sincere Practice of Religion; that is, a good Conscience. *Our rejoicing is this (says St. PAUL) the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity we have had our Conversation in the World.* To be conscious to our selves, that we have done what is our Duty to do, that we have acted agreeable to the Rules of Reason, that we have in every Station of Life endeavour'd to behave our selves inoffensively, in Humility towards GOD, in Justice and Charity to our Neighbour, is a Satisfaction which all Men wish for, though none are capable of conceiving the Greatness of it, but they that have try'd it. It is it self a real Pleasure really to approve our own Actions; if by these Actions we have been serviceable and beneficial to others, 'tis yet a greater Pleasure; and what still enhances the Satisfaction thereof, is, That they have been acceptable and well-pleasing to
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Almighty GOD, the best Judge of them, and most capable of rewarding them. In reflecting therefore on such a Behaviour, a Man finds, that he has consulted his own best and truest Interest thereby; that he has secured to himself the best of Friends; that he has laid the Foundation of a lasting and immoveable Comfort, which will end in Quietness and Assurance for ever. And this is a Pleasure which can *never cloy*, but the mind loves to *dwell upon it*: It is a Pleasure that always affords *something new*, as we go on in the Practice of laudable and vertuous Actions: It is a Pleasure, which neither Time, nor Age, nor Sicknes can rob us of, but rather increases, and becomes more sensible to us, the longer we have had it, and exerts it self with greatest Vigour, when we are most oppress'd with Pain and Sicknes, and when we come to have the least Taste of sensual Delights. It is a Pleasure, that gains strength by Age, and is best relish'd in Adversity; even at the Hour of Death, it supports the sinking Spirits, and cheers the Soul, and makes it in a manner forget the Agonies of it, whilst we can compare the past Actions of our Lives with our future Reward, and look forward to that Day, when none of our good Deeds shall be forgotten; but shall be rehearsed in the Presence of GOD, of Angels, and of Men, and shall be rewarded with an *Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the Heavens for us*.

These are the Sources, these the Grounds of a Christian's Chearfulness: They appear in themselves to be solid and substantial; and if compared with those Means which are commonly made

made use of, they will appear to be more so. Some Men's Satisfaction rises or sinks with their Fortunes, and their whole Pleasure depends upon their Wealth. Whatever this Pleasure be, it is certainly attended with a great many Cares, and Fears, and Anxieties, which a worldly Mind, that dotes upon Riches, cannot be free from, thro' the many Losses, Hazards, Difficulties, Disappointments, to which his Dependance on such uncertain, precarious things must be subject. The same may be said of Honours and worldly Grandeur: They have more shew than substance, and the Burdens thereof, upon a due Estimation, would be found more real than the Pleasures. Sensual Delights and Entertainments may seem to stand upon a better foot, and may be thought by some the *proper* Instruments of Chearfulness. But these, 'tis evident, are very short-liv'd and unsatisfactory, they quickly pall and grow insipid to the Appetite that desired them. All that the Voluptuary can pretend to, are some Flashes of Mirth, which are quickly extinguish'd, and therefore cannot be Instruments of a constant, settled Chearfulness.

I do not speak of these things, as if the Possession of Wealth, or Honours, or the Enjoyment of those sensible Gratifications, which Nature has provided, were inconsistent with Christianity. For it does suppose, we *may be possessed* of them, and that we *may have Pleasure* in them; nay, the *greatest Pleasure* they can afford us, is in using them as Christianity has prescribed. For who has greater Pleasure in Wealth, than he, who is not a Slave to it, but can use it (as occasion offers) in doing good? Where does Honour and Power appear with greater Lustre, or give greater Pleasure to the

Person possessed of it, than in protecting the Innocent, in restraining the Injurious, in promoting and encouraging the Cause of Virtue? And as to the Gratifications of Sense, use them with Temperance, as Christianity requires, and you have all the Pleasure, without any of the Inconveniences which follow from Excess.

But if a Man places his *whole* Satisfaction in them, and pursues them *at any rate*, they will greatly disappoint him. The Pleasure they give him must be very imperfect, whilst there remain within the certain, effectual Causes of Uneasiness and Discontent, an inordinate Love of the World, irregular Appetites and Passions, restless Fears and Desires, a malicious or revengeful Spirit, and what is worse than all, a guilty Conscience. Riches cannot bribe these to be quiet, secular Power cannot suppress them, nor can worldly Entertainments wholly divert them: They will find a time to harass and perplex him, and oftentimes so far prevail, as to render his worldly Enjoyments tasteless. Add to this, that whatever Pleasure there be in these things, they are very uncertain and precarious, and in many Cases of no Service. They will not give any the least Ease to one that is in Pain, nor will they raise the Spirits of him, that is languishing upon the Bed of Sickness. In short, where there is *most Need*, they are of *least Service*; and when the Mind has greatest Occasion for Relief, they help only to depress it. But those Grounds of Chearfulness, which Religion lays, are of most durable and universal Service. They are on all Occasions, and in all Circumstances very useful and desirable; they do effectually remove all the Causes of Anxiety and Dis-

Discontent; they keep the Mind in constant Peace and Serenity, and bear up the Soul under the greatest Tryals and Afflictions of the Body.

The true Christian therefore has the only true Title to Chearfulness, to settled Satisfaction, to solid Pleasure. His Mind is free, his Conscience clear, his Hope is strong, and his Joy's his own: The World cannot rob him of it, Age cannot lessen it, Death cannot part him from it, nor Time put an end to it. This is a Scheme of Happiness worth pursuing. The *present* Pleasures of it far exceed all the Gratifications the wicked aim at, if they were *sure* of enjoying them. Christianity in this View (and this I think is the justest Light we can view it in) does not look like the rigid Imposition of an austere Lord, but the wise Prescription of a kind indulgent Father, who has a sincere Regard to our *present*, as well as *future* Felicity. It will indeed cost us some Pains at first, to *cultivate* this happy Christian Temper: But then we see, that the *imperfect* Gratifications of the World are not to be had without it. And why should we not labour for Substance, rather than for Shadow? For that true Pleasure, which can *never be taken away from us*, rather than for Trifles, which deceive the Imagination for a little while, and then *leave us for ever*?

But I will not trouble you with many Inferences from what has been said; they are easy and natural, which you may make at your leisure. I only beg leave to make a short Application of what has been said to the Occasion of our present MEETING.

That

That, which first form'd You into a select SOCIETY, and has since engaged You to continue it, was (I am perswaded) no other, than what I have been speaking of, a sociable Disposition, and a Chearful Frame of Mind: Not to solace one another in the mean and sordid Ways of Rioting and Excess; but an honest commendable View, of pleasing and being pleased with each other's friendly Conversation; a Desire of renewing former Friendships, of conversing with those, for whom You contracted an early Affection in your younger Years, whose Interests and Concerns (as NATIVES of the same COUNTY) are best known to each other, and who are therefore most capable of giving and receiving mutual Assistance, Advice and Satisfaction. Nor is this (honest and commendable as it is) the Bound of your View. But You have Regard to those, whose Circumstances will not allow them, to joyn with You in this Solemnity: And may be said to *sanctify* your FEAST, by making the Assistance of the Needy, and the Relief of the Distrest, one main Design of your MEETING. Benevolence is both a certain Sign, and a certain Effect of a chearful Temper. And I do not doubt, but some of you have felt by Experience the Truth of our Saviour's Observation, *That 'tis more blessed to give than to receive.* I have with Pleasure observed in my COUNTRYMEN, in the *University*, as well as in this *City*, a singular Regard to each other, a great Readiness to all good Offices, and a Desire to continue former Friendships, notwithstanding the many Opportunities, that offer in both Places, of contracting *new ones.* Nor do I find, that even the Party Heats and Feuds, which have greatly tended to divide the Nation

Nation in general, have been able to disconcert your honest Measures, or to destroy that *native Affection*, which has kept you together, notwithstanding some Differences in Judgment; in which (like Friends) You bear with one another, and which (like wise Men) you postpone to the Interest of Peace, and the mutual Satisfaction of a Friendly Commerce.

These Instances are, in my Opinion, great Symptoms of a Temper naturally chearful; averse to any Thing that is mean or sordid, that is easy in it self, and takes Delight in making others so too. This Consideration inclined me to the Choice of my *present Subject*, That I knew it could not be disagreeable to the Persons, for whom it was intended. And if I had offer'd any Thing, that might tend to improve or confirm that happy Temper, which Nature seems to have planted in You, I should think I had in some Measure discharged the Office, You were pleased to lay upon me. I was sure I could not *attempt* it in a more effectual way, than by giving you a true Image of Christianity, and a just Description of the happy Consequences that attend it. So that if I were asked, What I thought the most effectual way to promote Chearfulness, I should answer, By forming our Lives and Judgment by the Rules and Principles of Christianity. Christianity gives no Countenance to a sordid, sordid, or selfish Temper. Openness, Sincerity, Benevolence, a mutual Study to promote, and a mutual Delight in, each other's Good, are the best Marks of a Christian. These therefore, *Brethren*, as well for our own Sake, as Religion's, let us endeavour to cultivate and improve; and
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convince others thereby, That Religion and Chearfulness are, not only consistent, but inseparable; that *her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and that all her Paths are Peace.*

Let them, that deny a G O D, or question his Providence, live in continual Jealousies and Suspicions; Let them, that disbelieve a future State, terrify themselves with the Approaches of Death and Dissolution; Let them, that have an evil Conscience, be afraid, and them, that have hard and injurious Thoughts of God, despair: Let us leave Envy and Hatred, and a Desire of Revenge to narrow Spirits; Let Covetous Men be discontented; Let the Ambitious Man's Brains be filled with Schemes of Greatness, with dark Plots and deep Contrivances; Let the Voluptuary cheer himself with borrow'd Mirth, and for a *Flash of Pleasure* sink himself into *real Sorrow.* But Let us endeavour to cultivate and improve in our selves the Principles of true Religion; Let us praise G O D for his Mercies, use them thankfully, and in all our Needs apply our selves to Him; Let us trust to his Providence, submit to his Will, serve Him willingly, hope in Him to the End; Let us learn to despise the World, to delight in G O D and Goodness, to keep a Conscience void of Offence, and to be kindly affected towards all Men; If this be our Care and Endeavour, Chearfulness will naturally follow, and make RELIGION A CONTINUAL FEAST.

F I N I S.



